Statement of Arbitrator

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Sarajevo, 7 February 2001

Mr Justice Diarmuid P. Sheridan
Arbitrator for Dobrinja IEBL
CPIC, Tito Barracks
Zmaja od Bosne
71000 Sarajevo

I wish to introduce myself. I come from Ireland with nearly 50 years legal experience in every aspect. Up to March 1998 I was President of the Irish Circuit Court which has a very wide jurisdiction. On that month I retired but still have a great interest in law.

My country is small, totally independent subject to the rule of law and, more particularly, is not and has never been a member of any military alliance. For many years my country has, when called upon, readily responded to requests in the cause of peace with personnel in many lands and has had casualties to be mourned. The desire, therefore, of Ireland is to assist in the propagation of peace and the resolution of conflict.

Speaking for myself, I wish to mark the great honour conferred on my country by the request for a judicial person to be made available to act as an Independent arbitrator under the terms of reference contained in the Decision of the High Representative.

As will be noted from that document I am obliged to bring fairness and equity to my task. I would, therefore, invite all persons and bodies to assist me by making submissions stating each point of view and subsequently attending the settings of the Arbitration hearings and to give such evidence as each person or body has. This will be carefully noted by me and nobody will be turned away; in fact the only requirement will be relevance.

I cannot stress, too highly, my desire to serve and to give satisfaction to the participants. The Arbitration in its totality will be conducted into great courtesy. All I would ask is for the participants to offered to me the same courtesy even when they may have strong views to offer. I will be in contact with the participants so far known to me, but this must not be seen as excluding any persons or bodies from participating in the arbitration proceeding.

I propose to hold a preliminary setting at Tito Barracks on Tuesday 13 at 2 oąclock. Obviously, the CPIC HALL has limited accommodation so that if a large number of persons were to attend many would be disappointed. I suggest, therefore, that in the meantime, interested groups should choose a spokesman, or spokesmen, to represent their respective views. The names of those chosen should be submitted without delay to my Register, on phone number 066/204 967, who will prepare an appropriate list.

OHR Statement, Sarajevo, 7 February 2001